

If I Could Be With You (One Hour Tonight) by EvieSmallwood

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Summary:

One day, she'll be coming home to him. For now, she has to sneak into his house.

If I Could Be With You (One Hour Tonight)

Author's Note:

- For , [FateChica](#).

The title comes from Louis Armstrong's "If I Could Be With You (One Hour Tonight)"

For clarification's sake, this is set before the last one shot; in early January of 1989.

For my two main peeps bc one inspired this whole thing and the other one is always so encouraging. I'm a sap. I keep dedicating my fics to you two but FUCK IT LET ME LIVE OKAY.

Onward with the mileven!

Baby, baby

I wanna be with you tonight

Her shoes crunch as she stalks over the white expanse of his lawn, careful to sift the snow back into place behind her so as not to leave a trail. It's cold outside—bearable, but her nose is still red at the tip and her hair is damp from the light flakes that had fallen on the way over here.

El shimmies her way up the side, taking the usual and familiar route; through Nancy's empty room, down the hall. Quickly, she ducks through Mike's door and shuts it behind her, careful to prevent too much noise.

He's a lump under his covers; the only visible part of him is the ends of his dark hair, which are lightly curled and stand out starkly against the light blue of his flannel pillowcase. El's heart skips a beat, and she lets out the smallest sigh.

She's been waiting for this all night; the chance to be with him. It'd been one of the absolute longest days of her life (with Jonathan

flying back to New York after the wedding and Christmas break, and the rant she'd endured from Will about his boyfriend—not to mention the fact that she'd had to head down to the laundromat to wash the dirty clothes of four living people, go home, clean out the fridge of old food, and finish her homework—and that was all around a full day of school). It'd taken forever everyone in the house to fall asleep.

At least, it felt that way.

El swallows. She starts to toe her way across the room, careful to step in the spots she knows the floor won't creak, avoiding piles of clothes and books and—

rawwwwwr

“Shit!”

El hisses in pain, grudgingly kicking away the toy dinosaur just as Mike shoots up in bed. He squints at her through the darkness.

“El?”

“Hi,” she whispers back.

Rory continues to sound, filling their awkward silence.

And then Mike starts laughing. He rubs his eyes and chuckles and she really can't be pissed because he looks like *moonshine* and *starlight* and he's *positively magical*.

El quickly dashes over and pounces on the bed. It bounces beneath them as she wraps her arms and legs around him and they fall back against the mattress. Mike holds her close. She pulls the covers up and snuggles deeper into him, if that's possible. Her heart races, but even so her eyes flutter closed. He's so *warm*, still sleep-riddled and groggy.

It's serene, being with him, enveloped in his body heat with her head tucked under his chin. Mike lazily runs his fingers up and down her back.

“So what brings you to my bedroom at—” he leans up, straining to

see the clock, “twelve-thirty at night?”

El presses a lazy kiss to his neck. “Missed you,” she says.

Mike shivers. She can just see the flush tinting his skin, though the only source of light is from the street lamps outside. They’re hardly effective through the curtained window, but she’s *close*.

“You’re freezing,” he mutters, and suddenly there’s no space between them at all, she’s on her back, and they’re cocooned in his warm, Mike-smelling blanket.

El doesn’t feel freezing. She feels like she might combust any second.

Mike’s lips graze her forehead. He’s moving slowly and lazily, perfectly indolent with this forebearing atmosphere.

He kisses her nose, which tickles and he knows it. El wrinkles it, opening her eyes just in time to see his dopey grin.

“You’re stupid,” she pokes his cheek.

Mike nods, still smiling. “Your fault,” he presses his nose against her own this time. “You make me stupid.”

Then his head tilts and his mouth slants against her own. El moans into the kiss, wrapping her arms around his neck. *Yes, please.*

He’s slow about opening up to her, a bit teasing, but it’s faultless and unparalleled as soon as it deepens. She feels it everywhere; from the tips of her fingers, playing with his hair, to her stomach (which fills with a glowing, pulsating through her), to her toes.

Mike nips at her lower lip before pulling away.

El can’t help but feel disappointed. She frowns. “What are you doing?”

It sounds all whiny and small, but it makes him laugh—too loudly, she claps her hand over his mouth.

Mike licks her palm (*gross*) which prompts her to rip away.

“Michael.”

“Sorry,” he replies, not sounding sorry at all. He’s only laughing more (though it’s thankfully quieter this time).

“How’d you know I wouldn’t be into that?”

His cheeks colour again. He bites his lip, looking her up and down with a cocked head.

El rolls her eyes. “I’m not serious,” she says.

Or am I? Is what crosses her mind next, with the way his eyes have darkened, infused with a gravity that sucks her in and holds her gaze.

“Why did you stop kissing me?” she manages to whisper.

Her hand has somehow found its way to his face, finger tracing his jawline and then his bottom lip, his cupid’s bow...

“I have to warm you up everywhere,” he says decidedly, with a small nod.

Then all she can think is *oh, wow*; he works his way down her neck, and her collarbone, and her sternum, back arching. Then he scoots lower, pressing his heated lips to the skin of her abdomen, where her shirt has ridden up. It’s scorching, and it makes her gasp a little bit. Her stomach dips in response, and he works her t-shirt up with his nose.

One, two, three, four... a line of kisses, all up her stomach. They’re feather light but they weigh her down. She feels like she’s sinking into this bed, absolutely stunned.

His touch is like the spark that starts a wildfire within her, consuming everything in its path; every doubt, every coherent thought. It leaves nothing but a hunger for more, a driving need. It’s complete insanity and she loves it.

But of course, he has to be a complete dweeb and ruin everything by giving her a raspberry right over her belly button—her most ticklish spot.

El squeals, trying her best to stifle it. She could kill him.

Mike does it again, and again. She can't breathe from laughing so hard and it's all she can do to not make sound. She tries to draw in air as she squirms away from him, but Mike only pulls her back and does it again.

"Mike," she gasps, "stop—" again, "*Mike!*"

El is writhing on the bed and he's looming over her, lording this power. She could stop it... if she really wanted to. But also he's giggling like they're twelve again and the sound makes her heart skip a beat.

Still, she keeps trying to wriggle away. Mike doesn't let her. "Mine," he says, holding her tightly. He tickles her sides, her rib-cage, her arms, and by the time he gives in she's breathless.

El lays there, panting. She tries to get ahold of herself, to maybe hit him or get revenge or something, but he kisses her cheek and she knows she's done for.

"I love you," he says.

Oh, god. Marry me. Please. Right now. "I love you, too."

He beams. It's definitely the sweetest most lovesick sight. She really could do it.

Mike plops down beside her, though. They lay there for a minute, staring at each other. His hand is a solid weight against her side, but she takes it in her own and intertwined their fingers. She loves to look at the way his bones flex visibly against his skin when his joints move, loves to trace the lines on his palm. She could probably draw them from memory.

"Read me something," she says.

Mike grins. He leans over her, body pressing into her own with a sort of familiar carelessness. He shuffles around with the miscellaneous items by the side of his bed, before procuring a comic book and a flashlight.

El pulls the covers over their heads, tangles their legs together, and lets him hold her while he reads in a calm, low voice.

“Dad, hey, Dad! How come the elevator goes up to 113?”

He falls asleep first, the flashlight going limp in his hands and landing on his chest. El gently extracts it from his grip and flicks it off, before setting aside it and the comic book. She breathes in the fresh air, not the warm, stifling stuff they'd created under the blanket.

It's blissfully cool.

Mike shifts closer to her. He buries his face in the crook of her neck and pulls her against him, sighing contentedly.

El loves this. She loves when he's clingy and needy and all wrapped up in her.

But now he's asleep, and even if that neediness transcends into his unconscious, she's still all alone and awake.

El amuses herself by running her fingers through his hair, relishing in the occasional complacent sigh she receives. It's so soft, smelling faintly of his Irish spring soap and flopping easily against her touch.

Time passes. Mike rolls over onto his back. She hovers above him, soaking in his pale white skin, bathed now in moonlight.

One, two, three, four, five... El counts every freckle on his nose and cheeks, occasionally losing track and having to start all over again. It's better than counting sheep, by far.

Eventually, she starts kissing them as she counts, *one, two, three, four, five...* Mike hardly stirs.

That's how she falls asleep; her forehead leaning against his cheek and her arm draped over his chest.

Only she doesn't sleep for long.

Before she knows it, Mike is shifting restlessly, face scrunched up and lips downturned. El starts at the sudden, quick movements that jostle her awake.

He's having a nightmare.

As quick as she can, grogginess fading mercifully quickly, El shakes him by the shoulders. It takes a few tries before it works.

"Fuck," comes tumbling out of his mouth the minute his eyes open.

"What happened?"

She tries to keep her voice casual; no need for alarm, it was just a dream. It's always just a dream.

You're okay. I'm here, you're okay.

The tension bleeds away. His gaze focuses on her. "Phone didn't work," he says. "Couldn't call you. Went to Lucas's and it didn't work either, and then his house burned down, and then all of the sudden we were at Dustin's but Nancy was there, and she kept stealing my pencils? I don't know what I needed those for. But I was pissed. So I think I stabbed her with one."

El snorts. She tries not to, but she can't help it.

Thankfully, he laughs alongside her. "It was weird," he decides. "She started crying and I felt like shit."

"Do you want to call her?"

Mike swivels around to the clock again. "It's three," he says.

"Time zones," she reminds him. "Last I heard she was on the early shift at the sub shop."

He chews on that for a minute, and then shakes his head. "I'll check in tomorrow," he says. Then his expression changes to one of guilt. "I'm sorry I woke you up."

"It's okay," she nuzzles his cheek. "I'm hungry, anyway."

He quirks a brow. “Wanna go get a bite?”

El nods eagerly. Food sounds awesome; her stomach feels like a bottomless pit. She’d forgotten to eat dinner entirely.

Mike attempts to sit up, but she stays wrapped around him.

“Hey, shortstack?”

“Mmm?”

“I have to go get a jacket.”

“I’ll be your jacket,” she offers with a grin, nipping at his earlobe.

Mike blushes. “Get off me, you koala.”

He gently works her off, despite her best attempts to stay latched onto him. Then he shuffles around his room, grabbing a sweater (one she’s stolen about seven times, and she has no idea how it found its way back here—oh wait, that’s right, never mind), a black jacket, and his shoes.

“Where are yours?”

“Nancy’s room,” she pulls her hair back and ties it in a knot.

Mike nods. “We’ll go out that way, then.”

He grabs his spare keys from his jeans pocket, holds out his hand to pull her from the bed (the warm, soft bed; but also, *food*), and leads her from his room to Nancy’s.

El slips on her chucks while Mike undoes the latch on the window. Their exit isn’t exactly graceful, but it’s also not the worst. El has climbed out this way more times than Steve probably has.

“Waffle House?” Mike asks, as soon as they’re safely on the front lawn and walking toward the station wagon.

They get there at half past three. It’s totally empty, aside from the

two people lounging behind the counter. There's also a cook in the back, from what El can figure.

"What can I getcha?"

The waitress, Mandy, eyes them lazily.

"A waffle," Mike says. He pulls El toward the back, out of earshot. Mandy rolls her eyes and calls back the order before returning to her *Seventeen* magazine.

El sets the slushie they'd stopped for on the table and tugs his arm so that he sits next to her rather than across. She leans her head on his shoulder.

"Hey."

Sleep. "Hmm?"

Mike nudges her. "Shortstack."

El takes the hint and looks at him. "Yeah?"

"You look really pretty."

If it were possible to turn into goop, El would have done so right then. Instead, she settles for grabbing him by his sweater and kissing him. It's soft, and a little cold; he tastes like raspberry icie.

Mike rests his forehead against hers.

I can't believe you exist.

She doesn't really mean for it to slip out, but it does. Mike's gaze flickers from her lips to her eyes, all surprised and red-cheeked and cute.

It's true. She can't believe someone so good and honest and kind lives and breathes. Her whole life, she'd only known monsters; human or otherwise. And then there had been him, a gangly mess, searching for a friend she now calls her brother, desperate. So full of hope and love and all of the small things that build him up, make him Mike, make

him hers.

Mike Wheeler, hers. Her miracle. Her saviour.

Right back at you, Shortstack.

“One waffle!”

Mandy drops the plate down on the table, causing them to both start. Mike glares after her. “She’s so not getting a tip.”

El doesn’t mind though. Mostly because thank god, sustenance. The waffle is warm and crispy and topped with a generous amount of syrup.

They work their way through it, slowly. Mike leans back after a while, but El keeps offering him bits.

Then, out of nowhere, his mouth is pressing against the corner of her own and his tongue is licking the skin there.

Oh.

The fork falls out of her hand with a clatter. Mike leans back, all innocent. “You had a little bit of syrup.”

El blinks. “Oh.”

He grins. “Knew you were into it,” he says, before scooping up the fork and grabbing a piece of waffle. He holds it out to her.

El blinks again, *fuck*. She bites the food off the utensil nonetheless, chewing in a slow daze. He’s all smug and amused as he looks at her, but El feels like drowning. And it’s not because he kissed syrup from her face.

It’s because he’s perfect, and sometimes that realisation (though it’s not a realisation so much as a remembrance) sweeps her off her feet. She can sit here in this dingy diner at four in the morning and be totally mesmerised just because he’s here too, and he exists.

Mike frowns, concerned. “You okay?”

“Yeah,” El nods. The corners of her eyes are prickling; she gives him a watery smile. “I’m good.”

More than good, because as long as he’s living and breathing and next to her, as long as he’s just him—dark eyed, adorned with his spray of freckles, smiling crookedly and taking her hand—she’ll be okay, and she knows it.

The universe isn’t complete without Michael Wheeler, because Michael Wheeler completes her universe.

“You want the rest of it?”

(i want all of you)

“You can have it.”

(my heart)

If I could be with you, I'd love you strong

If I could be with you, I'd love you long

I want you to know that I wouldn't go

Until I told you honey why I love you so

Author's Note:

I WAS SO UNSURE ON HOW TO END THIS I HOPE
IT DIDN'T SUCK

Anyway this is probably the softest thing I've ever
written and honestly? No regrets.

Feedback is much appreciated!! Y'all give me life!

Scream at me on tumblr (@mad-maxxy); we can flail
about mileven anytime, my dudes.